

colleagues paid tribute to his judgement and dedication. His impact, behind the scenes, was immense. He was a mentor not only to Members, but to other people who staffed the floor, particularly the many Pages who have come and gone over the years.

Ron was born a year after Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1942, and died on November 14, 2022. His classmate, Congressman Jim Kolbe, died days later on December 3rd. Donn Anderson died July 30, 2020. I am personally grateful for the service of these three men of the House.

Madam Speaker, I include in the Record a statement from the Honorable Robert E. Bauman, one of Ron's colleagues on the staff here who later represented the First District of Maryland in the House.

IN MEMORIAM—RONALD W. LASCH

THE HONORABLE ROBERT E. BAUMAN, FIRST DISTRICT, MARYLAND (1973–1981)

Owen Lovejoy, a member of the House from Illinois (1857–1864), was close to President Abraham Lincoln, who called him “my most generous friend.” On an obelisk in Princeton, Illinois, in his honor are the words of Lincoln: “Let him have his marble monument along with the well assured and more enduring one in the hearts of all those who love Liberty unselfishly and for all.”

Indeed, Lincoln was correct; true friendship is a matter of the heart. Ron Lasch was my friend, and a respected friend to many on Capitol Hill during the 37 years he served on the House Republican floor staff.

He started his 42-year House career as a Page in 1958, sponsored by Representative William B. Widnall of New Jersey. In 1963, he was named as telephone clerk in the House Republican Cloakroom. Ron joined me there where I was also a phone clerk.

On November 22, 1963, a Friday, the House had adjourned when news of President Kennedy's death in Dallas came over the news tickers in the House Lobby. Ron and I were flooded with anxious calls to the cloakroom.

It is no exaggeration to say that Ron Lasch made possible my elective career to the Maryland State Senate and to Congress. He did so by working the cloakroom phones countless late days, allowing me to go to night school and obtain degrees from Georgetown University foreign service and law schools.

As manager of the Republican Cloakroom, he knew intimately party positions and floor developments and became a trusted source of information for Members and their staffs. He mentored many Pages over the years and was a graduate of the Capitol Page School in the Library of Congress.

In 1968, after I resigned and returned to my home on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Lasch became manager of the Republican Cloakroom, the official floor source of information for Republican Members.

As a private space for Member interaction, the cloakroom was ideally suited for Lasch to answer questions about pending legislation. He was a friend and protector of the gracious lady who for decades ran the cloakroom lunch counter, the late Helen Jones Winfield Sewell. When Ron retired in 2000, many House Members joined in paying him tributes.

Ron was trusted because of his vast knowledge of House parliamentary procedure and traditions. He understood the personal side of lawmaking, forging relationships with Members from both sides of the aisle. He was careful to respect House Members, remembering his staff role. But while he was a quiet, reserved presence, in private he had his own sardonic estimate of those he served.

Ron's role as Republican floor staffer expanded over the years, culminating in his

work as Floor Assistant to Speaker Newt Gingrich in 1995. In my opinion, Gingrich could have avoided many of his subsequent troubles had he taken Ron's advice about House rules.

My own daughter, Genie Eardley, a House Page (CPS Class of 1983), knew him well and called Ron “irreplaceable.” As Lincoln suggested, Ron's monument endures in the hearts of those who knew and respected “the gentleman from New Jersey.”

#### ESTEBAN E. TORRES POST OFFICE BUILDING

SPEECH OF

### HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 12, 2022

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 7832 to rename the post office located at 396 South California Avenue in West Covina, California after the late Congressman Esteban E. Torres, a long-time San Gabriel Valley legislator and beloved community leader.

A proud son of immigrants, Rep. Torres dedicated his life to serving his community, our nation in uniform, and working families across Eastern Los Angeles County. I proudly introduced this legislation with Rep. LINDA SÁNCHEZ so future generations will remember Rep. Torres' legacy and be inspired by his service to our region and nation.

Rep. Torres was born on January 27, 1930, in Miami, Arizona. Shortly after finishing high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Army from 1949 to 1953 during the Korean War conflict and was honorably discharged with the rank of sergeant first class.

After attending various institutions including, the Los Angeles Art Center, East Los Angeles College, and California State University Los Angeles, Rep. Torres was subsequently elected to serve California's 34th district. He represented the cities of Artesia, Norwalk, Santa Fe Springs, Pico Rivera, parts of Whittier, South El Monte, Industry, La Puente, Baldwin Park, and West Covina for 16 years in Congress. During his first five terms, Rep. Torres served on the House Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs and the Small Business Committees. In 1993, he was named to the powerful Appropriations Committee where he was responsible for delivering millions of dollars for public transit projects in Los Angeles County and throughout the State of California and advocating for U.S. policies that advanced democracies throughout the world. Rep. Torres also served as Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and as a Deputy Whip for the House's Democratic leadership.

Rep. Torres also was an accomplished artist. His art was featured in the Washingtonian Magazine, at numerous galleries throughout Los Angeles, and admired by his colleagues in Congress, friends, and family. Among his proudest accomplishments was being one of the founders, along with Supervisor Gloria Molina, of LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes, a world-renowned museum honoring the past, inspiring the future, and recognizing the cultural influence of Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and all Latinx in the greater Los Angeles community.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 7832. Renaming the West Co-

vina Post Office in Rep. Torres' honor will be a small token of gratitude for his lifetime of dedication to his community and country.

HONORING MRS. KATHY J. THOMAS

### HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

Mr. PALAZZO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of my district staffers, Mrs. Kathy J. Thomas. I met Kathy in 2019 and quickly brought her on staff as a Constituent Liaison in my Gulfport district office. During her tenure, Kathy has assisted nearly 3,000 constituents through casework with compassion and dedication.

Kathy grew up in West Virginia in the small town of Follansbee. In 1988, she graduated from Brooke High School, and shortly thereafter, she married her high school sweetheart, Mark. After their wedding, she and her new husband moved to Biloxi, MS, where he served in the United States Navy Seabees. Her grandfather, Kale E. Wells, served in the United States Navy during WWII. Kale would have been proud of her decision to marry Mark as he rose through the ranks to retire after serving 30 years as a Command Master Chief.

Kathy and her husband raised two beautiful, intelligent daughters, Taylor and Riley. Taylor graduated from Mississippi State and the University of South Alabama and works as a Labor and Delivery Nurse at USA Children's and Women's Hospital in Mobile, AL. Riley graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi and recently started a job at the DuBard School for Language Disorders in Hattiesburg, MS.

Kathy attended Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, earning an associate degree. Kathy volunteered for years as an ombudsman as her husband served and deployed with the United States Navy Seabees. While raising her daughters, she worked as a preschool teacher and assistant teacher. Her passion and dedication to helping others led her to work as a Congressional Liaison making a difference in the daily lives of the constituents of South Mississippi.

Kathy has been a valued, loyal, dedicated, and compassionate asset to my staff and me. I am grateful for her positivity and can-do attitude over the years. Madam Speaker, I am honored to express my gratitude to Mrs. Kathy Thomas for her service to Mississippi and my constituents.

COMMENDING DR. CHRISTA MARTIN FOR HER SELFLESS SERVICE TO HER COMMUNITY AND THE GREAT STATE OF TENNESSEE

### HON. MARK E. GREEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and accomplishments of Dr. Christa Martin of Columbia, Tennessee.